

**SUMMARY OF THE
NATIONAL DATABASE COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 11, 2001**

The National Database Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) met on Thursday, July 11, 2002, at 8:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) as part of the Eighth Annual NELAC Meeting in Tampa, Florida. Chairperson Matt Caruso of the New York State Department of Health led the meeting. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss agenda items that follow.

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Caruso introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He then had all members introduce themselves to the audience.

NATIONAL DATABASE CONTRACTOR'S PRESENTATION

Mr. Caruso noted that some NELAP AAs have already uploaded data to the NELAC National Database using FTP Software that has been developed to create the files in order to do this.

Dr. James Stemmler reported that the National Database is not yet live since the funds allocated to its development have been depleted. Dr. Stemmler proceeded to explain where the project was experiencing difficulties and what was being done to resolve this matter. It was asked why, with the amount of money already used for this project, the Database was not yet live. Dr. Stemmler responded that the direction on requirements had shifted.

Dr. Stemmler proceeded to demonstrate the database application on the web, as it would be used by recognized accrediting authorities, NELAP administration, and the public. The key points discussed during his presentation include:

- Database Scope and Purpose
- Project Scope
- Current Status
- Application Characteristics
- Application Capabilities
- Application Users
- Project Activities
- Screen Shots

Mr. Stemmler demonstrated the form the NELAP AAs will be using online and how to run reports. He opened the floor to comments and questions during the demonstration. The answers were given by Dr. Stemmler and/or Mr. Caruso.

Q: Where did the requirements for this system come from?

A: Comments from this Committee and NELAC. Some of the requirements are from five years

ago and will be updated once the database is up and running.

Q: With reference to the NELAP AAs, will they have the capability for uploading and downloading or simply publishing information to it? Can you get electronic results for it?

A: There is an uploading capability via the web and FTP and download by FTP. It can produce reports but no electronic results via FTP.

Q: What is the timeline for finishing this project?

A: The Director of NELAC will have to answer that question, as it is her budget. One thing that needs to be included in the budget is the ability to add changes to the Standards, as they become effective. If we had adequate funds we could go live in a short time. However, no response to our request for additional funding has been received.

Q: Is secondary accreditation available for this database?

A: Yes

Q: Is there an allowance for other FOTs and who is allowed to put in more FOTs?

A: The EPA will handle that.

Q: There was a statement made at the interim meeting that the EPA could not guarantee the accuracy of information in the database. Is this correct?

A: That is correct. The quality of the data is the responsibility of the accrediting authority. If you discover an error with the data, send us the correct information and the accrediting authority will revise it. The EPA does not have the ability to verify all the information that comes in.

Q: As a public user, would I still have to call and verify that the information is correct?

A: You can use it to find a lab and then you can verify the information with the lab and if the two of you find there is a mistake, let us know and it will be corrected. We at least need to have a database available for the NELAP AAs to use, to see who is approved and who isn't and so they know that changes have been made. When the primary accrediting authority makes a change on a record, then the secondary would be notified. There is a table that lists all secondary accrediting authorities for that laboratory.

Q: Is it possible to have multiple primaries?

A: Yes.

Q: Why can't we go to user acceptance now?

A: We are still getting error messages. We still have some bugs to work out.

Q: Is it possible to look at state databases that are functional and see if it is possible to adapt them into a national database?

A: The state of Kansas would be willing to look into this possibility. However, a state database may not be large enough to handle all data on a national basis.

Q: Is the security aspect that important to us that is needs to be run by the federal government?

A: It is to the accrediting authority. He who owns to computer has access to the information on the computer and we have to have some confidence that our information is safe and our data not changed. We need a database that will stay updated with the changes that we make. The public wants this information available.

Q: Should this committee pursue other options for a database?

A: It is generally agreed that there is need for a national database. The Accrediting Authorities have no objections to a subcommittee being formed by Dr. Jeff Flowers to explore other options for a national database.

CONCLUSION

Dr. Flowers will form a subcommittee to explore various options to fulfill the need for a national database. This subcommittee will bring its report to the National Database Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mr. Caruso adjourned the meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS
NATIONAL DATABASE COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 11, 2002**

| Item No. | Action | Date to be Completed |
|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Dr. Flowers will form a subcommittee to explore various options to fulfill the need for a national database. This subcommittee will bring its report to the National Database Committee. | Date to be determined |

**PARTICIPANTS
NATIONAL DATABASE COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 11, 2002**

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|--|--|---|
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